

ANDERSON, IN - Congressman Pence [participated](#) in a prayer service for those affected by the earthquake in Haiti, as well as giving an update on the federal response to the humanitarian crisis there. The *Herald Bulletin* filed the following story about the service:



Published January 19, 2010 07:42 am

Local groups band together for Haiti

Keeping hope alive, getting aid to 2 million group's purpose

By Dave Stafford, Herald Bulletin Staff Writer

ANDERSON-, Ind. - Leonie Wilson on Monday spoke for local Haitian children whose home nation has been devastated by an earthquake.

"We have to say we love you all," the 10-year-old said at the close of a Haiti Relief gathering at Madison Park Church of God. "Thank you for helping our family and our country, too."

Leonie's story of the past several days mirrors the harrowing hours that Haitians have endured since the catastrophic quake a week ago. "When I heard from my family I was very happy. I heard they were alive," she said.

Days went by before Leonie heard the news. Her adoptive mother, Kim Wilson, on Friday received a text message from Leonie's father, Abner Pierre, after days of trying to connect. "They lost everything and there's no work, but they're alive and they have hope," Kim Wilson said.

Keeping that hope alive and getting immediate aid to an estimated 2 million affected was the purpose of Monday's gathering that brought together representatives of church and mission groups, government representatives and community members interested in learning what they can do to help.

The immediate need is cash. Donations of food, clothing and medicine will be needed, but "the time for that is not now," said the Rev. Jim Lyon of Madison Park. "The hardest thing to ask for, and the hardest thing to collect, is money."

Lyon said getting into Haiti at the moment is nearly impossible because there are few government officials to check shipments.

U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, R-6th District, outlined the federal response to the disaster and praised community efforts, including prayers for Haiti at Monday's event. "I'm very pleased at the strength and coordination of the United States response in the region," he said.

Pence also noted the level of aid from Americans. "People run to the point of need in this country," he said.

Anderson, he said, "is a community that goes to its knees when it sees people struggling."

Read the entire story [HERE](#) .